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ABSTRACT

The paper is a product of the 3-year project, "Functional Mainstreaming for Success," designed to develop a model for instructional mainstreaming of handicapped children (3-6 years old) in community settings. The literature on in-service training needs of regular teachers teaching handicapped children in the mainstream is reviewed and a proposal for in-service training of needed teacher competencies is offered. The tri-partite training program features (1) ongoing general skills training, (2) student specific training (when the teacher knows prior to mainstreaming that a specific student will be joining his class, and (3) problem focused training which occurs after placement in response to specific needs. Tables compare the three types of training, and describe each in terms of tasks, responsible parties, objectives, and tools/aids. (DB)

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TRI-PARTITE MODEL OF TEACHER TRAINING

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Introduction

Each winter there are literally millions of people who can hardly wait to "hit the slopes" of the nearest ski area. The ages of skiers range from toddlers to great-grandparents, and the range of expertise varies just as widely as do ages. Ski runs have been developed which can accommodate anyone from terrified first timers, to daredevils with an unconscious death wish. Skiing is a sport described in almost poetic terms by many devotees. However, though many people enjoy skiing, how many of them would be willing to attempt skiing full-speed off an olympic size ski jump?

One might gain considerable knowledge about ski-jumping simply through reading articles written by professional jumpers. One might sit around ski-lodge bonfires listening intently as different jumping techniques are discussed and argued. One might even attend formal classes on the theory and styles of ski-jumping. But even the most self-confident would see this sort of "training" as less than adequate preparation for attempting a hundred meter jump on a steep slope.

In a similar vein, one cannot learn how to swim just by studying books, watching films, or seeing live demonstrations of swimming strokes. Sooner or later, one must actually get in the water and flounder around. Such "performance competencies" require intensive practice before they can be mastered.

Problems with Teacher Training

A profession as complex as teaching requires a great many "performance competencies" as well as numerous "knowledge competencies" (Horner, 1977).

There is, as yet, no consensus on what competencies are required, though there have been several attempts to identify them. The problem of identifying competencies is compounded by the mandate of Public Law 94-142 to educate all children in the least restrictive environment.

Adams, Striefel, Killoran (1985) completed a literature review of the teacher competencies necessary for effective mainstreaming and identified 23 major competency areas. These competency areas include both knowledge and performance competencies. Teachers will likely have been exposed to most or all of these competency areas at some point during their professional training. They will have developed a certain level of expertise in many of the competencies. Most teachers, however, will require additional training if they are to successfully mainstream students who are handicapped. There are two major reasons for this.

First is the fact that different pre-service training programs vary in their emphasis on particular skill areas. Graduates from different programs will likewise vary in their level of proficiency in a given competency area. Second, the knowledge and skill levels adequate for teaching students who are not handicapped will often be insufficient when teaching students who are handicapped.

It is often the case that teachers need to reach a "higher" level of expertise in order to meet the needs of students with handicaps. This necessitates additional work for the teacher in acquiring new knowledge and skills, or in improving existing ones. Ultimately however, there is a substantial benefit for teachers and students alike. As teachers master

skills at the level required to successfully teach students who are handicapped, they become more effective in teaching all students.

Far too many teachers, however, lack the skills necessary for effective mainstreaming; there exists a distinct "competency gap" between the skills teachers should have, and those they actually possess (Crisci, 1981, Ringlaben, & Price, 1981, Adams, et al, 1985). Preservice training programs are not preparing new teachers for the challenges of mainstreaming (Masat & Schack, 1981; Stamm, 1980; Adams, et al, 1985). Indeed, one might question whether it is even possible for preservice programs to completely train anyone in a profession as complex as teaching.

Far too often, those people charged with the training of teachers fail to identify and emphasize those teacher competencies which cannot be adequately mastered unless one is able to "get in the water" and practice. Certainly a great deal of practice occurs during student teaching, but such training varies considerably in the nature and quality of supervision provided and the resultant corrective feedback received by the student-teacher. Also, as was mentioned previously, different pre-service training programs vary in the emphasis placed on different skill areas. The net result is that teachers vary considerably in the level of pre-service training they have received in the competency areas identified as essential.

But whatever may be done to upgrade the quality of pre-service training, there are many thousands of currently practicing teachers who need training even more urgently. It is these teachers who are struggling right now to deal with students they were never trained to teach (A Common Body of

Practice, 1980). They need, and in many cases are requesting, inservice training.

In the attempt to train teachers in the necessary competencies, there are some types of inservice training that appear of markedly limited utility (Larrivee, 1981). A few 1-2 hour training sessions at the end of a school day are simply not sufficient to train anything but isolated fragments of the knowledge aspects of the required competencies, to say nothing of the performance aspects of those competencies. Individual reading of journal articles or books may suffice for certain knowledge components, but barely begins to address the performance aspects of the competencies. Teacher participation in 1-2 day workshops may help develop both knowledge components and some performance components of the needed competencies. Workshops, however, suffer from lack of continuity, lack of follow-up, and fragmentation (i.e., learning only inchoate fragments of the necessary body of knowledge). In addition, many of the performance aspects are too complex to teach in a purely didactic fashion. They require experiential learning, and must often be "hand-shaped" in actual teaching situations. Attempting to teach the performance components using only lectures, readings. or discussions, would be equivalent to teaching piano or swimming by the same methods.

The importance of developing high quality inservice training would be difficult to over-stress. Mercer, Forgnone, and Beattie (1978) state that, "no profession in the social sciences can assume that preservice education alone is sufficient for maintaining professional status" (p.30). In a similar vein, Egbert and Kluender (1979) argue that, "it is not reasonable

to assume that a given training period can prepare a person for a lifetime in any complex profession" (p.19).

Powers (1983) argues strongly for a major upgrading of inservice training. He states that,

> "While inservice provisions are important in maintaining teacher skills, they are essential to the realization of any significant education reform. If any change-effort in public schools is to be successful then a viable inservice format must be devised that specifically addresses the needs of those who are to serve as change agents.
>
> One of the major current educational reform efforts is the mainstreaming movement. If regular classroom teachers are to successfully occupy roles associated with mainstreaming, inservice must provide opportunities for developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes prerequisite to the effective integrations of handicapped students." (p. 433).

Peterson (1983), offers the following thought provoking insights regarding the need for quality inservice:

> "The final test of mainstreaming rests with the ability and attitude of the teachers and others who implement the programs; it is they who must translate theory into practice" (p. 25).
>
> "No matter how progressive and innovative an idea, its use becomes limited when there are few practitioners who understand and can properly implement the idea . . . Well trained personnel are at the heart of a successful mainstreaming effort" (p. 25).
>
> "Personnel training is perhaps the most important component of successful mainstreaming. To enroll handicapped children in regular settings or normally developing children in special settings without adequate staff preparation is to invite failure for both staff and children. Individuals asked to assume responsibility for youngsters with whom they have limited or no experience and little formal preparation are themselves handicapped" (p. 42).

Proposal for Inservice Training

To meet the training needs of teachers, a tripartite model for inservice training is here offered. This model allows for three types of inservice training which address three types of training needs that teachers may have. If a teacher has the luxury of knowing beforehand that a certain student is going to be mainstreamed into her/his class, the teacher will want to determine if training is necessary to prepare for the unique needs/problems/limitations of this particular student (e.g., the student may be epileptic, blind, require special adaptive equipment, communicate primarily by signing, have a specific behavioral program in place, etc.). Once a student is actually mainstreamed, there may arise specific problems that require prompt and practical intervention. The teacher will then want technical assistance or brief training that helps resolve the problem (e.g., student is aggressive toward other students, falling behind in academic tasks, socially isolated, etc.). The third type of training in the present model is aimed at long-term development of teacher knowledge and skills. What is required, to meet this training need, is an inservice training program that is comprehensive is scope, but is sequential, includes guided experience, provides practical and readily usable training, begins with a needs assessment, includes periodic assessment of skills to determent mastery, and allows for follow-up in teachers' own classrooms. A comprehensive plan such as this could well include (a) guided reading, (b) brief (1-2 hour) didactic training, (c) short workshops or mini-classes, (d) specially designed summer quarter classes, (e) supervised practica, (f) in-class demonstrations and shaping of teacher behaviors, (g) in-classroom consultation with specialists, and (h) consistent, long-term follow-up. Such a training program would ideally be designed and jointly sponsored by

university faculty from special education and regular education departments, and by practicing teachers with experience in mainstreaming. It would necessitate much closer interaction between university staff and teachers in the field. It should include built-in assessment procedures to evaluate efficacy. Teacher trainers would demonstrate in practice (as opposed to pedantically orating about) such competencies as task analysis, individualized instruction, behavior modification, and classroom management. The training should be designed to focus on those major areas which have not typically been a part of the training experience of most regular education teachers (e.g., attitudes, behavior modification skills, exceptional conditions). In addition, since trainers will be demonstrating individualized teaching, specific student needs for training could be identified (the students, in this instance, being practicing teachers). Possibly an "IEP" could be developed to help each student meet personal educational needs. The authors of this paper are not, however, aware of any inservice programs that meet, or even closely approximate, this "ideal". [1]

The following tables should help clarify the tri-partite model of training herein advocated. Table 1 gives an overview of the three types of training, with a comparison of the similarities and differences between each of the three types. Tables 2, 3, & 4 give an overview of the steps for implementing each of the three types of training.

Insert Tables 1, 2, 3, & 4 here.

Tables 5, 6, & 7 list some of the advantages and disadvantages of each type of training. These are intended as representative rather than

comprehensive listings. Also included are possible training options that would help give teachers the experiences desired from a particular type of training.

Insert Tables 5, 6, & 7 here.

Summary and Discussion

A significant "competency gap" currently exists between the knowledge and skills teachers should have, and those they actually do have. This gap results, in part, from the increasing demands placed on teachers by the legislative requirement of P.L. 94-142 to educate all students in the least restrictive environment. Pre-service and inservice training programs for teachers have not yet changed and grown sufficiently to prepare educators for the challenges that confront them as they teach students who are handicapped.

Pre-service training programs must reflect the reality that mainstreaming necessitates changes in traditional approacher to teaching. Inservice training must be comprehensive rather than piecemeal, must include in-classroom shaping of teacher behaviors, in-classroom consultation with specialists, and long-term follow-up. All of this will, obviously, be possible only with adequate funding. The authors recognize that this ideal may never be completely achieved in reality. But the attempt to define "the way it ought to be" may serve as a guide in attempts to develop more adequate training programs.

The tripartite model of inservice training discussed in this paper in one step in the direction of upgrading teacher expertise. The foundation of the model is the long-term development of teacher skills through quality inservice training that virtually spans each teacher's professional career. The "student-specific training" and the "problem focused training" are seen as supplemental to the "general skills training", though they are both essential types of training if teachers' needs are to be adequately met.

The purpose of this paper is not to recommend specific training programs (i.e., commercially developed training packages, or training sponsored by particular institutions or groups), nor advocate particular ways of changing existent training programs. The paper does advocate the tripartite model of inservice training as an effective vehicle for meeting the diverse training needs of practicing teachers.

The paper strongly advocates that educators at all levels acknowledge the unpleasant reality that we have not been adequately prepared to meet the increasing demands that are expected of teachers. Having acknowledged the reality of the problem, teachers must then confront the true causal issue at its root: Pre-service training does not prepare teachers adequately for the new challenges of teaching, and current inservice training is too limited in both quantity and scope to bridge the competency gap.

It will be largely due to a team effort that the existing competency gap is narrowed and eventually eliminated. Legislators, parents, students, administrators, and teachers must all work together for the common goal of improving education for all children by improving the training opportunities

of educators. Teachers must assume a leading role in this effort, for it is they who are ultimately confronted with the daily challenges of mainstreaming.

Table 1

THREE TYPES OF INSERVICE TRAINING FOR MAINSTREAMING

GENERAL SKILLS TRAINING (ongoing)	STUDENT-SPECIFIC TRAINING (pre-mainstreaming)	PROBLEM-FOCUSED TRAINING (post-placement)
a. for all teachers	a. for receiving teacher	a. for any teacher needing help
b. scheduled on a regular basis in response to identified areas for skill development	b. occurs prior to mainstreaming a specific student	b. occurs as needed in response to problem situations
c. extended, long-range (training time measured in weeks or months)	c. short-term, intensive (training time measured in hours or days)	c. short-term, limited (training time measured in minutes or hours)
d. skill centered	d. skill centered	d. problem centered
e. general applicability to many students	e. student specific	e. situation specific
f. aims at over-all upgrading and development of teacher expertise	f. focused on special training necessary for working with a particular student	f. focused on particular problem and situation
g. planned in advance, organized, sequential, responsive to over-all long-range needs	g. planned in advance, organized, responsive to specific anticipated short-range needs	g. planned "on the spot", spontaneous, responsive to immediate needs
h. spans entire teaching career	h. time-limited	h. time-limited
i. assessed via "General Teacher Assessment"	h. assessed via MESA (Mainstreaming Expectations and Skill Assessment)	i. teacher self-assessed via Needs "Request for Assistance"
example: A number of teachers at a school all desire training in methods for evaluating student learning— a series of workshops are offered on this topic over a several month period.	example: A teacher needs training in how to recognize and manage occasional seizures in an incoming student, and also how to prepare the other students in the class to respond to a seizure.	example: The students in a class are overly solicitous of a student in a wheelchair, to the point that the student is developing some "helpless" behaviors that are of concern to the teacher.

Table 2

GENERAL SKILLS TRAINING (Ongoing)

TASK	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	OBJECTIVES	TOOLS/AIDS
Needs assessment teachers	Training Coordinator as perceived by teachers	Comprehensive assessment of teacher training needs	General Teacher Needs Assessment and
Prioritize needs	Training Coordinator	Based of the completed needs assessments, identify those training needs which are perceived by teachers as most critical	General Teacher Needs Assessment
Select trainer/s	Training Coordinator	Select trainers with the expertise to train teachers in each of the highest priority competency areas	Directory of Local Training Resources
Develop a training plan	Training Coordinator and teacher trainer/s	Develop a long-range training plan which meets the needs of teachers through a variety of training experiences	Teacher Training Manual; & Minimum Levels of Training
Implement the training plan	Training Coordinator and teacher trainer/s	Implement the planned training experiences	
Evaluate the training plan	Training Coordinator	Assess the effectiveness of teacher training by objective measurement of change in specified areas	

Table 3

PROBLEM-FOCUSED TRAINING (Post-placement)

TASK	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	OBJECTIVES	TOOLS/AIDS
Identify a problem	Regular teacher	Specify the particular situation or student behavior that is causing the problem	"Request for Assistance" form
Identify a resource person	Training Coordinator	Select a trainer or consultant with the expertise to assist the teacher with the problem identified	Directory of Local Training Resources
Develop a problem solving strategy	Consultant, or teacher trainer, and teacher	Jointly develop a plan to alleviate the problem	
Implement the strategy	Consultant, or teacher trainer, and teacher	Begin the training, or other problem solving strategy	
Evaluate the strategy	Consultant or trainer	Measure effectiveness of training by change in problem situation or behavior	
Evaluate the need for general skills training	Consultant, or teacher trainer, and teacher	Determine if the teacher could benefit from longer-term training in this competency area	Developing a Comprehensive Training Plan

Table 4

STUDENT-SPECIFIC TRAINING (Pre-mainstreaming)

TASK	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	OBJECTIVES	TOOLS/AIDS
Pre-placement review process	Special education teacher	Assess student readiness for mainstreaming; identify mainstreaming objectives and activities to meet those objectives; make tentative selection of receiving teacher (this to be done by administrator); have the receiving teacher become familiar with student in the environment of the self-contained classroom	MESA
Needs assessment (receiving teacher)	Training Coordinator, teacher, and special education teacher	Assess training needs of receiving teacher to prepare for the advent of the specific student being mainstreamed	MESA
Identify trainer	Training Coordinator	Select trainer capable of training receiving teacher in areas identified	Directory of Training Resources
Develop training plan	Trainer	Develop learning experiences that will train the teacher in the need areas identified	Minimum Levels of Training
Implement training plan	Trainer	Begin the learning experiences identified above	
Evaluate the training plan	Trainer and teacher	Assess the effectiveness of training by objective measurement of change in specified areas	

Table 5 - GENERAL SKILLS TRAINING (Ongoing)

Advantages - best suited for continued upgrading of skills; promotes generalization; provides a framework for incorporating skills learned (in isolation) via other two modes of training.

Disadvantages - expensive in both money and time; teachers may be reluctant to participate; requires extensive planning, coordination, and effort.

Training Options - self study; college courses; workshops; supervised practica; model programs; in-class trainers; lectures; films or videos; guided reading; consultation with specialists; retreats; laboratory experiences; (see Powers, 1983 for more ideas).

Table 6 - STUDENT-SPECIFIC TRAINING (Pre-mainstreaming)

Advantages - Teacher sees child in special education context prior to regular class placement; teacher becomes familiar with child; child is "readied" for regular class via training in specific areas; teacher gets advance training rather than being limited to crisis training.

Disadvantages - may require highly specialized training; may require a substantial amount of teacher time; skills may not generalize to other students.

Training Options - Workshop; one-on-one training; OJT (on the job training) in child's special education class; self study; special education teacher comes with child into regular class to demonstrate hand-shaping; college course.

Table 7 - PROBLEM FOCUSED TRAINING (Post Placement)

Advantages - responsive to teacher request for training (thus teachers are more highly motivated); may reduce or prevent potential problems; when training is effective it demonstrates vividly the value of and need for, further training (and may help "sell" reluctant teachers on the value of inservice); relatively inexpensive; requires minimal planning; provides an opportunity to learn skills needed for specific situations, and the principles learned may generalize to other situations.

Disadvantages - dependent upon teacher request (if no request, no training); has to be done quickly, with little time for planning and preparation; problem-solving may be so specific and limited that skills are learned in isolation; if training is highly specific, the skills may not generalize well to other contexts.

Training Options - consultation; observe/train in model classroom; one-on-one training by specialist; specialist come into class for demonstration and hand shaping; school inservice.

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